

Brief Intervention for Heat Preparedness

Early preparation prevents heat-related illness and death. Use this tool to help patients prepare for extreme heat.

The following factors put people at higher risk of heat-related illness (**bolded at especially high risk**):

- **Mental illness (schizophrenia, depression, anxiety)**
- **Substance use or substance use disorder**
- Use of medications that impact fluid and/or thermoregulation (anticholinergics, diuretics)
- Chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, respiratory disease, cerebrovascular disease
- Older age (≥65 years old)
- **Living alone or social isolation**
- **Marginally housed or housed without cool spaces**
- Living with disabilities or having reduced mobility
- Cognitive impairment
- Working in hot environments (e.g. kitchens, outdoors)
- Being pregnant
- Younger age (<5 years old)

ASK about preparedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are they prepared for hot weather? Have they started planning for heat?</i>
ADVISE about heat events and alerts	<p>Inform that hot weather is dangerous for them, especially prolonged indoor temperatures ≥31°C.</p> <p>Inform of the different types of heat alerts issued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Heat warning</u>: it will be very hot. Take the usual steps to stay cool. • <u>Extreme heat emergency</u>: it will be dangerously hot. Activate heat preparedness plan (see the “Assist” section).
ASSESS and ASSIST with preparedness	<p>Share and review: Preparing for Heat Events page Staying Healthy in the Heat</p> <p>1) Is their home prepared for heat?</p> <p><u>Recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a digital thermometer indoors to know when it is getting too hot. • Install an air conditioner (AC) in at least 1 room or install a heat pump. Discuss tax rebates and provincial assistance program for AC installation. • Identify a cooler space in their home to sleep during extreme heat and hot weather (e.g., room with AC). Prepare this space to stay overnight. • Install thermal curtains or window coverings indoors, and exterior covers like cardboard or reflective films outdoors. • Use fans during the late evening and early morning hours to help move cooler air indoors. • Check that their AC, fan, heat pump, and/or thermometer are working before it becomes hot. <p>2) Do they know where to go if they do NOT have a cooler space, or their home becomes too hot?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify friends or family they can stay with who have AC or cooler spaces. • Identify community locations where they can go to get cool: libraries, community centres, malls, theatres, parks/shaded green spaces, and faith centres. • Contact band office or local government for local cooling centre information.

	<p>3) Who will check on them and assist them during heat?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify someone to check on them during heat events and help them with cooling measures. <p>4) Do they know where to get information or notifications about heat alerts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current heat alerts: on web (Environment Canada) and download app: (WeatherCAN). Local radio, TV, and print news . Hello Weather telephone service (English: 1-833-794-3556. French: 1-833-586-3836). <p>5) Do they know the signs and symptoms of severe heat illness and when to seek care?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek urgent care if syncope, confusion, severe nausea/vomiting, motor or coordination impairments, dysarthria, anhidrosis, tachypnea, tachycardia, oliguria, hyperthermia (>39°C)
<p>ARRANGE for follow up</p>	<p>Arrange for further follow-up regarding heat preparedness, if needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your clinic/care centre offers check-ins during heat events, refer them to the appropriate team.

Additional patient resources

[Heat-Related Illness Information from HealthLink BC](#)

[FNHA Info Sheet on Preparing for and Staying Safe during Heat Events](#)

[Health Checks During Extreme Heat Events: A Guide for Doing In-Person or Remote Health Checks](#)

[Canadian Red Cross Friendly Calls Program](#)

Additional clinician resources

[Acute Care During Extreme Heat: Recommendations and Information for Health Care Workers](#)

[Medications That May Impact Fluid and Thermo-Regulation](#)